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614 621 extinct, are unusual; normally, the group is largely centred in one village, but with members scattered in other localities. There is no central organization. It is generally recognized that such a unit belongs in the village where its first ancestors settled, and the leading chief of that village is, therefore, an important person in the family, though without status of [622] "head" of it. His advice may be appealed to in cases of disputes [553] concerning names, but he lacks judicial authority. Theoretically, the descendants of the elder of two first people are considered as "elder brothers and elder sisters" of those descended from a younger brother or sister; but this is nothing more than an accepted fact; it plays no part in the social life of the community.

552 614 773 In addition to human names, the origin myths include those applied to dogs. The first ancestral group had dogs, and these animals had names, or were given them by their powerful masters. Ever since that time their descendants can apply these designations to their own dogs. It is unnecessary to validate such names, but no two canines can be given the same one at the same time, according to the rule which governs the bestowal of human names. This matter was not investigated in detail, and the only dog's name collected was one for which [539] the origin myth is as follows:

> When *Tăl·ĭo* was first settled in the beginning of time, the houses were built in parallel rows, one above the other, up the side of a steep knoll. At the very top was a toilet-house, built over such a steep incline [514] that excrement rolled down the hillside. In consequence, one of the early chiefs living there gave to his dog the name, *Nulĭqumutl di mnk'*, "Rolling excrement," which has since been preserved in the ancestral family of his descendants.

LAND

424 423 177 Great difficulty was experienced in obtaining information about land tenure. The Bella Coola resent keenly the way in which their land has been occupied by white settlers without, according to their standpoint, proper compensation. Ques-

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tions on this subject always excited them, but every effort was made to verify the following statements.

As with names, the easiest way to understand the rights of the ancestral family in land is by first considering the mythological explanation, which mirrors conditions as they existed at the coming of white men. On reaching this earth the first people are believed to have prospected for suitable settlement sites, places where salmon and olachen could be caught, and if possible, near side valleys where berries were abundant. Here they released the animals and plants which they had brought with them, on which they thenceforth subsisted, in accordance with the supreme deity's instructions. The members of the group pre-empted these areas for themselves. Waste land, far from any village was, and still is, free to anyone. A few years after the first settlements had been made, according to the myths, the supreme god sent down to Kimsquit a certain *Alquniām* who allotted and marked the territory which was the property of each community; at that time a village consisted merely of a group of the first settlers. No similar myth was recounted for either Bella Coola or *Tăl-ío*, although their concepts with regard to land are identical with those of the Kimsquit. This really gave a sacred sanction to the possession of land, an important matter to a people so religiously inclined as the Bella Coola.

The system of land tenure follows the same somewhat abstruse principles that govern the possession of names in an ancestral family. Hunting and collecting grounds appropriated by the first people, or by their immediate descendants, are the property of their offspring, the ancestral family. The Bella Coola term for such an area is *sol'loam*, also called, *nxnumsta*, which means "Food Supply."

It will thus be seen that a hunting-area is not the property of any single individual, but belongs to a group of persons, most of whom live in a single town. The relatives of a man who intends to give a potlatch usually give him, temporarily, exclusive rights to the hunting-ground. As with names, there

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423 614 is no doubt that a man tends to lose those rights in property which are strictly his, if they are located at a distance. Thus several men claim that they are legally entitled to hunt at Kitlobe, but from mere difficulty of access neither they nor their fathers have exercised the right, and it would have been lost in the course of a few generations, even without the utter decay of custom which has followed the advent of the white man. Practically, a man hunts only in the grounds of those ancestral families in whose origin myths he has names, though, theoretically, he is entitled to hunt on any hunting-ground of any ancestral family of which he is a member whether or not he holds a duly validated name from its origin myth. It is not necessary to confirm the right to property as with a name, [illegible] right to that area of the ancestral family to which that designation belongs. Although the ownership of land in distant regions is of little practical importance, it is, none the less, a [554] matter of great pride to a man to feel that he has rights in many places. The efforts of an individual to make good those [721] claims has often led to bloodshed; in fact, one intelligent old man stated that property disputes were the principal cause for [554] war in British Columbia. A person who lacks hunting-grounds is little better than a slave, whereas one who has much land is important.

The Bella Coola regard land as almost inalienable. Though a man does not own the land of his wife's ancestral family, he can use it and his children have full rights to it. Conversely, a wife can gather berries on her husband's land, though it is [574] not hers. A guest at a village may be allowed to use the territory of his hosts, but it does not become his. In the old 721 days wars between the coastal tribes were common, but though 423 slaves were taken freely, land was never seized; such is un- [547] thinkable to a Bella Coola. In fact, several of the older people inquired how it had been possible, in the first world war, for the allies, whose cause they believed to be righteous, to annex territory from Germany. If the victors had killed or enslaved

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the Germans it would have been moral and proper according to Bella Coola ethics, but to take land was unheard of. 423 [727]

Since land is only valued for hunting or collecting purposes, it is not divided into small areas. Any man can build his house at will near the village. It is said that at Kitlobe the crab-apple trees are the property of different ancestral families, themselves members of different tribes, but this is unknown in Bella Coola. It may be mentioned that the Bella Coola [829] somewhat naïvely assume that all other coastal tribes have ancestral families similar to their own, although they recognize that some of them also have a clan system which has no counterpart in their social organization. Since the concentration of the tribe on a small reserve and the beginning of [177] agriculture, a system of individual ownership of cultivated land has sprung up. It is realized that if a man clears and [428] cultivates a field, the produce is his own, and he can will all land to whomsoever he pleases. Likewise a man who rings a tree to kill it for firewood is the sole owner. The Bella Coola regard uncultivated land in the reserve as being at the disposal of anyone, a concept which appears not to have been taught them by any white administrator. Its origin seems rather to lie in the old belief that any unpreëmpted land, far removed from a village, can be used by anyone. It is recognized that the reserve cannot be considered as a *xal'alam* belonging to any ancestral group, hence it is free to all. One corner of it, however, includes the lower part of a side-valley formerly used by the people of *Tsmaił*. An old man, whose ancestral family [614] lived in that village for generations, has set his bear-traps in this corner of the reserve for a number of years without interference from other hunters, who go far afield with their traps. Even within the limits of the reserve it is felt that this man has the prime right to that area for the use of himself and his family.

Theoretically an ancestral family may die out. Several 614 accounts were received of old men who, believing themselves 428 to be the sole survivors of their family, bequeathed their names 721

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Bella bella NE5

BC 614 428 721

and hunting-grounds to those who had helped them in their old age. But in every case the gift turned out to be of doubtful value, since young men grew up who claimed membership in the supposedly defunct ancestral family and combatted the right of those to whom it had been given. This always led to war.

BB BC

The following is an instance of a feud which arose from the bestowal of a hunting-area.

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It is said that about 1850 the people of *Tcawat* (probably Bute Inlet) captured a Bella Bella woman as a slave. She escaped and fled up the *Tcawat* River, hoping to come in contact with the Bella Coola, who often hunted in that area. The woman was found by the mother's father of an informant who carefully looked after her while he was hunting beaver and brought her back to Bella Coola, thence sending her to Bella Bella. In gratitude her father, a Bella Bella chief, gave her rescuer the hunting-area known as *Nulam*, near Kwatna Inlet, with the consent of the members of his ancestral family.

BB [425]

The land so alienated should have remained permanently in possession of the Bella Coola ancestral family, but was too far removed from Bella Coola to be used regularly by the new owners. After the death of the Bella Bella chief, a number of individuals who claimed membership in his ancestral family asserted their rights to it. Many years later, after white traders had made their appearance on the coast, a Bella Coola went to *Nulam* and killed a large number of beaver. As he was leaving with their pelts he was murdered by some Bella Bella, ostensibly as a trespasser. But for the restraining influence of the white man this incident would undoubtedly have led to war. The informant still feels that he is entitled to hunt at *Nulam*, and did so several times when he was a young man; but his sons have never exercised the right, and it has practically lapsed.

BB BC 423 622

It is unfortunate that the above incident is drawn from Bella Bella, where the power of chiefs is much greater than among the Bella Coola. Consequently it is impossible to say

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Bella bella NE5

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exactly what right the Bella Bella chief had to dispose of the land. The informant assumed that he must have been powerful enough to dictate to his followers, an unknown possibility in Bella Coola. However, the informant regards the case as typical of what would likely happen should a Bella Coola try to give away land. Out of generosity or gratitude old men have sometimes done so, but always they have forgotten someone, perhaps a mere infant, who on growing up lays claim to the *sol'olam*.

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Hunting-grounds are not the only valuable parts of the country. Even more important are stretches of river suitable for salmon-weirs. Of the same type are good places for olachen-nets, and rocks from which these fish can be caught with scoop-nets. Like hunting-grounds, these are said to have been pre-empted by the first people[1] and have passed into the ownership of the ancestral families descended from them. It is needless to repeat the gradual lapsing of rights to property of this kind in distant areas, since the principle is the same as that already described for land.

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In one respect, salmon-weirs differ from hunting-areas, since the latter can be used by any number of individuals, whereas the number of salmon-traps possible at any one weir is limited. Again the mythological origin must be given to explain the customary usage. If, for example, a salmon-weir supposedly built by one of the first groups of people was fully manned in the third generation by ten individuals, it is as-

[1]Several Bella Coola myths describe how the first-comers brought with them from above stone hammers for the construction of fish-dams, and how others were provided with miniature dams which grew larger when placed in position. Mr. H. I. Smith kindly gave the writer the following account, received from an elderly Bella Coola:

Long, long ago a certain *Tamaḵus* lived with his father, the Sun, who decided to send his child to earth. He came down to *Staiz*, carrying a stone beneath his arm-pit, and accompanied by a Wolf. *Tamaḵus* made the stone into a pile-driver with a face sculptured upon it, and with this tool drove piles to make a fish-weir. After a while a number of human beings came paddling up the Bella Coola River. In course of time the Wolf returned above, but *Tamaḵus* remained on earth catching salmon, and teaching the people the method which was in use until the last few years.

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sumed that ten is the largest number of traps possible at that weir. Those who have the right to that weir are the members of the ancestral family with the names of those first users. At this point the logic of the Bella Coola fails to uphold the mythological pattern. No salmon-weir has remained in existence since the beginning of time; when one broke, owners were sometimes infants, and those who repaired the break became regarded as the rightful possessors. The system of ownership prevailing at the time of abandoning the weirs, was that *individuals*, not groups, had rights to certain sections of the weir which were willable like other personal property. In most cases this right was transmitted with a name, marking the section of weir, which had to be duly validated by presents. In other cases, the intangible ownership was willed without any mark whatever.[1] Unless bequeathed in this way, disputes were frequent. Rights of this kind were never sold although an owner often leased his section for a night, or longer period, receiving goods in return, and not forfeiting his ownership thereby. This was particularly common when the renter was planning to give a potlatch. No case was heard of in which the right to a certain section of salmon-weir was given to a non-member of the ancestral family. Theoretically, this was possible, but practically it would be so inconvenient that it is most unlikely ever to have occurred, since the Bella Coola is never such a slave to legal privileges that he fails to be guided by common sense.

Although individual ownership is thus recognized with regard to sections of salmon-weirs and suitable places for olachen-nets, the owner is bound to share his haul. When he catches a large number of fish, anyone, whether related to him or not, can demand some. He cannot refuse, since to do so would brand him as selfish. The effective check on this system

[1] Great difficulty was experienced in learning about the distribution of rights to sections of salmon-weirs. The evidence is conflicting, and though every effort was made to verify and check the above, there may be further regulations which were not learnt.

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764 friends of the deceased, pick up the coffin and carry it through
[766] the hole. In former times it was frequently difficult to obtain
784 pall-bearers for a slave or friendless person on account of the
[761] taboos to which a person performing this service was subject. If a dead person should be taken through a doorway, others using it would soon follow the corpse to the next world. For the same reason, a body must never be moved across the central line of a house; the passage is, therefore, made from the side where it happens to be lying. As soon as the corpse has been taken through, the removed planks are quickly replaced. Mourners and guests stream out through the doorway and follow the coffin, some of them carrying the bundles containing part of the goods of the deceased. Meanwhile the pall-bearers follow the woman with the torch to the cemetery, taking care to carry their burden so that it faces the direction
[761] in which they are going; if a dead person is allowed to look backwards, he will beckon some relative to accompany him and the one so summoned will soon die.

There is a cemetery near every village, usually fifty to a hundred yards behind the row of houses in a place from which the heavy timber has been cleared. On arrival, the pall-bearers set down their burden close to the spot where the guide has placed her flaming bark on the ground. The personal possessions of the deceased are likewise deposited near the fire, which is kept alight by female relatives throwing on it small quantities of the dead person's clothing and utensils. The near kinsmen of the deceased choose the exact site of the grave, which must never be dug before the bringing of the corpse.
[423] There is no ownership of plots within the cemetery, so that the hole can be made wherever desired. A favourite location is close to the grave of a mother, father, or other near relative, but this is optional; bones are sometimes uncovered when digging, and in that case earth is thrown in once more and a new site selected. There are no professional grave-diggers,
[767] nor are arrangements made in advance for men to perform this duty, but friends, especially strong young men, are willing to

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APPENDIX A

MECHANICAL PROCESSES

NO attempt was made to study either the material culture of the Bella Coola, or their methods of manufacturing, but information on some points was obtained incidentally. All sociological and religious features connected therewith have already been described.

THE TAKING AND PREPARATION OF OLACHEN

The run of olachen, *sputɣ*, comes about the end of April, and as many as possible are caught. In preparation, nets, *älte'xᵘ*, are brought out from the boxes where they have been stored during the winter, examined, and repaired. If necessary, new ones must be manufactured out of nettle-(*lsna-*) fibre laid away by the women for this purpose. By rolling the material on their legs, they produce a thin twine; five strands of this are then interwoven, making a finished cord capable of resisting great strain. The nets are constructed by the men. The type used at the present time, which is said not to differ from that formerly employed, consists of a purse-like sack, oval in cross-section, open at the wider end and tapering very gradually to the other, which is closed. The total length is about thirty feet, the diameter at the open end about eight feet, and at the closed end about three feet. A new net is dipped in a mixture of boiled hemlock-bark to darken it, and then boiled in a solution of willow-bark to prevent the knots from slipping.

The setting out of a net is not an easy task, so two or three men agree to work as partners. In the present degenerate days, property rights are not respected and each group selects a suitable spot. The best location is where the water is about three feet deep and runs rapidly, but without ripples, over a smooth piece of the bottom; such a place is called a *skläx*. When the fish begin to run plentifully, the partners paddle out to set their net, taking with them four stakes, each about ten feet in length. The weight of a full net is tremendous, so the poles have to be driven down at least six feet, a difficult task on account of the stony bottom. Selecting the exact spot, one of four posts, *[illegible]djäles*, is set upright and held in position by being tied to a cross-piece, *nudjiqosta*, fastened to the canoe for the purpose. While his two partners hold the craft steady, the third man begins to pound down the stake; metal mauls are now commonly used, but in former times this work was always done with an unhafted stone maul, *luxwoma*. The fishermen relieve one another intermittently until the top of the pole has been driven down to within

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Xemlaix: One of the first men to settle at *Ẋemqo·ts* in the beginning of time.
Xemtmm: *Kusiut* name of a *Sĺskistl* man.
Xemxemálotla: 1—One of the nine supernatural siblings.
2—Ancestral name of a Bella Coola man.
Xemxemlaix: *Siwash* name brought from above in the beginning of time.
Xemxemtmm: 1—Supernatural beings who request the sun to appear.
[533] 2—One of the first men to settle at *Alqálaxl* in the beginning of time.
xe·tla: Boastful type of song used by chiefs on war expeditions and at potlatches.
Xedilkos: One of the first men to settle at *Ẋetlmelos* in the beginning of time.
Xelásu: *Kusiut* name of a Kimsquit woman. The designation is of Bella Bella origin.
[825] *ẋuxu:* Marten.
[412] *xíls:* Stone axe.
xılxıl: Party of potlatch messengers and the invitation they bear.
[203] *Xímpdimut:* Man mentioned in an ancient story.
Ximximlaix: *A'alk* man mentioned in an ancient story.
Ximximoslaix: Celebrated female shaman.
[821] *ẋuẋúnás·i, plural, ẋuẋunáxoksi:* Little girl.
[517] *Xuxunes:* 1—"Little Girls": Group of stars in the Great Bear.
2—Picnic, especially one on which fern root is gathered.
Xuxois: Bella Coola term for the Carriers living near Ootsa Lake. This is said to be their own name for themselves.
Xuximán·a, "Right Foot": *Siwash* repository named from part of a supernatural creature.
Xuyis: Mountain in the Carrier country.
xuxmánoas: Spirit, one of the supernatural elements in the human body.
xláxtmm: Ceremony prior to a potlatch when tasks are allotted and the donor's house destroyed.
xlánl: The entrusting, before death, of a name for the benefit of a relative.
Xlíkwals: Mountain in the upper Bella Coola valley.
[586] *xlokun·imut:* The irrevocable desertion of her husband by a wife.
Xmaxots: Locality below *Nusqalst.*
[825] *ẋmẋmatsl:* Minnows.
[601] *ẋmas:* Woman, or wife in indirect address (*ki ẋmelsaix:* My wife).
[614] *ẋmesáxta:* Female relatives of same ancestral family, term of indirect address.
ẋmesdám or *nuẋmesdám:* The right by which a husband uses his wife's land, though it is not his own.
[423] *Xnutli:* Bella Coola sorcerer living in the last century.
xoklt: The forcible washing of a Cannibal.
Xolàxwosem: Name acquired by a man mentioned in an ancient story.
[785] *xoldjut:* Intercourse held during ceremonial chastity; the term has a sacred significance.
[831] *Xomtsla:* Male professional singer who came down to the Dean River in the beginning of time.
Xomxomqa: Ancestral name of a *Siwash* man. The designation is said to have come from Smith Inlet.
Xonqotám: Supernatural scoop-net fisherman, servant of the supreme god.
Xoqalis: Bella Coola man mentioned in an ancient story.